

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 066362
ORIGIN SS-15

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA FLASH

UNCLAS STATE 066362

FOR AMBASSADOR JORDEN

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PN, PEPR

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO GENERAL TORRIJOS
DATED MARCH 15, 1978

PLEASE DELIVER TO GENERAL TORRIJOS SOONEST TODAY FOLLOWING
LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CARTER, OF WHICH TEXT FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT:

MY DEAR GENERAL:

AS YOU KNOW, THE SENATE IS NOW APPROACHING THE END OF ITS
DEBATE ON THE NEUTRALITY TREATY. ALTHOUGH WE EXPECT
THE FINAL VOTE TO BE CLOSE, WE REMAIN HOPEFUL ABOUT THE
RESULT.

WE HAVE MADE GOOD PROGRESS SINCE LAST SEPTEMBER WHEN YOU
AND I SIGNED THE TREATIES. THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS
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COMMITTEE ENDORSED THE TREATIES BY AN OVERWHELMING
VOTE. IN THE SENATE DEBATE, WE HAVE FORTUNATELY BEEN
ABLE TO PREVENT ANY AMENDMENTS TO THE TREATY OTHER THAN
THE SO-CALLED "LEADERSHIP" AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLES IV
AND VI. THESE INCORPORATE EXACTLY THE TERMS OF THE

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING PUBLISHED AFTER OUR CONVERSA-

TION OF OCTOBER 14.

IN CONSIDERING ITS RESOLUTION OF RATIFICATION OF THE TREATY, THE SENATE WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY ATTACH A NUMBER OF RESERVATIONS, CONDITIONS OR UNDERSTANDINGS REFLECTING CERTAIN OF ITS CONCERNS. WE HAVE MADE EVERY EFFORT AND HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL TO DATE IN ENSURING THAT THESE WILL BE CONSISTENT WITH THE GENERAL PURPOSES OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES AS PARTIES TO THE TREATY. I HOPE YOU WILL EXAMINE THEM IN THIS LIGHT.

AFTER APPROVING THE NEUTRALITY TREATY, THE SENATE WILL MOVE IMMEDIATELY TO CONSIDER THE BASIC PANAMA TREATY. WHILE THERE WILL BE PROBLEMS, I AM HOPEFUL THAT THE OUTCOME WILL AGAIN BE FAVORABLE, AND THAT THE TWO TREATIES COMBINED WILL GAIN FOR OUR COUNTRIES THE ADVANTAGES WE HAD ENVISAGED WHEN WE SIGNED THEM LAST SEPTEMBER.

I KNOW THAT THE LONG PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF THE TREATIES IN THE UNITED STATES HAS INVOLVED DIFFICULTIES FOR YOU AND YOUR COUNTRY. IT HAS BEEN A NECESSARY ELEMENT IN INFORMING THE AMERICAN PUBLIC OF THE REASONS FOR NEGOTIATING THE TREATIES AND THE BENEFITS THEY BRING TO BOTH PARTIES. WE HAVE MADE NOTABLE PROGRESS IN THIS REGARD.

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THUS, AS MATTERS STAND TODAY, WE ARE APPROACHING AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE. IF ALL OF US CAN CONTINUE TO WORK PATIENTLY AND CONSTRUCTIVELY FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUR OBJECTIVES, I BELIEVE WE CAN ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME WE BOTH DESIRE--SOUND AND EQUITABLE TREATIES IN OUR COMMON INTEREST.

/SIGNED/ JIMMY CARTER. END OF TEXT.

VANCE SUBJECT TEL REISSUED WITH DOWNGRADE CAPTION OR CLASSIFICATION PER S/S- O.

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